

Message Text

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ACTION OPR-02

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 EUR-12 NEA-10 ISO-00 SS-15 PM-04
CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 DODE-00 OC-06 CCO-00 SY-05
MMO-01 FBO-02 /075 W
-----141820Z 002555 /73

R 131729Z MAY 77

FM AMCONSUL STUTTGART

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3589

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY ATHENS

AMEMBASSY ANKARA

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

AMEMBASSY RABAT

AMEMBASSY TUNIS

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT

AMEMBASSY NICOSIA

USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN

CINCUSAREUR HEIDELBERG

CINCUSAFE RAMSTEIN

CINCUSNAVEUR LONDON

SECDEF WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L STUTTGART 840

SECSTATE FOR WLG, NEA, AF, EUR

E.O. 11652: GDS

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TAGS: AEMR

SUBJECT: ASMARA WITHDRAWAL DEBRIEFING

REF: ATHENS 3993, 4072; ADDIS ABABA 2829

1. SUMMARY: ASMARA CLOSE-OUT DEBRIEFING AT EMBASSY
ATHENS ATTENDED BY EUROPEAN LIAISON GROUP (ELG)

REPS UNDERSCORED NEED FOR DEPARTMENT AND POSTS TO FOCUS ON EVACUATION EMERGENCY WITHDRAWAL PROCEDURES AND TO CONTINUE TO IMPROVE STATE/DEFENSE INTERFACE. ASMARA EXPERIENCE CONFIRMED VITAL IMPORTANCE OF ALL ASPECTS OF COMMUNICATIONS INCLUDING DESTRUCTION OF MATERIAL AND EQUIPMENT. MAJOR RELATED PROBLEM WAS COMMUNICATIONS OVERLOAD TO POST, I.E., CONSULATE ASMARA, IN CRISIS SITUATION AND WITH LIMITED COMMUNICATIONS CAPABILITY TO BEGIN WITH. ALSO WORTH NOTING THAT CONTINUED LOYALTY OF LOCAL EMPLOYEES WAS A CRITICAL FACTOR IN SUCCESSFUL CLOSE-OUT. DEBRIEFINGS SHOULD BECOME STANDARD PROCEDURE AS INFORMATION/ LESSONS LEARNED SOURCE FOR DEPARTMENT AND OTHER ELEMENTS USG IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING ANY EVACUATION EXPERIENCE. ASMARA PARTICIPATION IN ELG-ARRANGED EMERGENCY WITHDRAWAL "FLAG FOCUS" EXERCISE IN ROME PROVED EXTREMELY BENEFICIAL AND TIMELY. END SUMMARY.

2. AT INITIATIVE OF EMBASSY ATHENS AND FSO KEITH WAUCHOPE WHO CONDUCTED ASMARA CLOSE-OUT, ELG REPRESENTATIVES PARTICIPATED IN DEBRIEFING OF CONGEN ASMARA STAFF MEMBERS. WHILE RECOGNIZING THAT EACH EVACUATION OR EMERGENCY CLOSE-OUT IS UNIQUE, SIMILAR DEBRIEFINGS SHOULD BECOME STANDARD FARE FOLLOWING ANY SUCH EVENT TO BROADEN KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERIENCE OF THOSE CONCERNED WITH AN RESPONSIBLE FOR SUCH ACTIVITIES.

3. ASMARA STAFF UNANIMOUS IN AGREEING ON VITAL
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ROLE PLAYED BY ALL ASPECTS OF COMMUNICATIONS, REINFORCING ELG CONCEPT FOR EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS EQUIPMENT. ASMARA EXPERIENCE ALSO SUGGESTS THAT DEPARTMENT'S OFFICES OF COMMUNICATIONS AND SECURITY SHOULD REVIEW PROCEDURES AND POSSIBLE ALTERNATIVES FOR DESTRUCTION OF MATERIAL AND EQUIPMENT IN EMERGENCY SITUATIONS. EXERCISE POINTED OUT NEED FOR DESTRUCTION TRAINING FOR ALL PERSONNEL, TO INCLUDE MARINE SECURITY GUARDS. MAJOR PROBLEM AREA SEEMED TO BE LACK OF DISTINCTION BETWEEN OVERT AND COVERT MEANS OF DESTRUCTION. ASMARA SITUATION CALLED FOR COVERT DESTRUCTION, BUT ONLY OVERT MEANS AVAILABLE AND THEIR USE, WHILE EFFECTIVE, WOULD HAVE EXPOSED POST ACTIONS TO LOCAL AUTHORITIES AND WOULD HAVE POSED THREAT TO SAFETY OF PERSONNEL AND PREMISES. E&E PLANS SHOULD INCLUDE PROCEDURES FOR "PRECAUTIONARY DESTRUCTION" AS WELL AS "EMERGENCY DESTRUCTION."

4. ASMARA ALSO EXPERIENCED EXTREME COMMUNICATIONS

OVERLOAD DESPITE "MINIMIZE" ON ASMARA COMMUNICATIONS AND EFFORTS EMBASSY ADDIS ABABA TO FILTER TRAFFIC DIRECTED TO ASMARA. MUCH OF TRAFFIC EXCESS SEEMED TO HAVE ORIGINATED FROM MILITARY SOURCES WITH ALL ORIGINATORS OPTING TO ERR ON THE SIDE OF OVER RATHER UNDERINFORMING. ASMARA, FOR ITS PART, ALSO HAD DIFFICULTY INCLUDING AS INFO ADDRESSEES ALL THOSE WHO HAD A PERIPHERAL OR POTENTIAL INTEREST IN ASMARA DEVELOPMENTS. ELG RECOMMENDS THAT THE DEPARTMENT COORDINATE WITH DEFENSE ON ESTABLISHING ONE OR MORE CENTRAL "CLEARING HOUSES" FOR ALL BUT THE MOST CRITICAL MESSAGES TO AND FROM A POST IN A CRISIS SITUATION. FOR THE MILITARY THIS RESPONSIBILITY COULD BE ASSIGNED TO THE SENIOR MILITARY COMMAND CHARGED WITH MONITORING OR POSSIBLY ACTING IN A CRISIS SITUATION. A TASK FORCE ESTABLISHED IN THE DEPARTMENT COULD EXERCISE SIMILAR CONTROL FOR THE CONFIDENTIAL

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CIVILIAN SIDE WITH PARTICULAR EMPHASIS PAID TO CONCISE AND INFORMATIVE SITREPS.

5. ASMARA PARTICIPANTS INDICATED THAT ONE MAJOR PRIMARY ACTION WAS TO ASSURE FOREIGN SERVICE LOCAL AND CONTRACT EMPLOYEES THAT THE USG WAS AWARE OF ITS RESPONSIBILITIES TOWARD THEM AND THAT THEY WERE NOT GOING TO BE UNCEREMONIOUSLY DUMPED. THIS TACTIC SERVED TO KEEP ALL LOCAL EMPLOYEES WORKING UNDER MOST DIFFICULT OF CIRCUMSTANCES. IT IS NO UNDERSTATEMENT TO NOTE THAT SUCCESSFUL EMERGENCY CLOSE-OUT OF ASMARA WOULD NOT HAVE BEEN POSSIBLE WITHOUT TIRELESS EFFORTS OF LOCAL STAFF. POSTS ARE ENCOURAGED TO PLAN FOR EVACUATION UNDER CONDITIONS WHEREIN "LOCAL NATIONAL EMPLOYEES ARE NOT AVAILABLE."

6. ASMARA, BECAUSE IT HAD BEEN ON ELG'S LIST OF SENSITIVE POSTS THAT BEAR WATCHING AS A POTENTIAL CANDIDATE FOR EVACUATION, HAD BEEN SELECTED AS A PARTICIPANT IN ELG-DIRECTED "FLAG FOCUS I" COMMAND POST EXERCISE IN ROME IN JANUARY (STUTTGART 159). ASMARA PARTICIPANT (WAUCHOPE) CITED SEVERAL BENEFITS STEMMING FROM LESSONS LEARNED IN ROME IN ADDITION TO TIMELINESS OF EXERCISE, COMING FEW MONTHS PRIOR TO ACTUAL CONDUCT OF ASMARA CLOSE-OUT. DEPARTMENT, WLG AND OTHER REGIONAL LIAISON GROUPS ARE THEREFORE URGED TO CONSIDER SIMILAR EXERCISES AS STANDARD PRACTICE SELECT NUMBER OF POSTS IN SENSITIVE AREAS THAT COULD BECOME INVOLVED IN SOME SORT OF EMERGENCY EVACUATION.

7. COMMENT. FSO WAUCHOPE CURRENTLY SCHEDULED
ASSIGNMENT IN DEPARTMENT. ELG STRONGLY RECOMMENDS
SIMILAR DEBRIEF FOR DEPARTMENT AND INTERESTED
DEFENSE AGENCIES.

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8. THIS IS COORDINATED ELG MESSAGE.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
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Concepts: n/a
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Decaption Note:
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Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
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Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
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Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
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Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
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Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 77 ATHENS 3993, 77 ADDIS ABABA 2829
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
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Review Date: 15-Nov-2004 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2525880
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: ASMARA WITHDRAWAL DEBRIEFING
TAGS: AEMR
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odhc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/5798a494-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009